IN THE SPECIFICATION:

On page 2, line 18, through page 4, line 18, please amend this paragraph as follows:

- establishing~~plotting~~ a fatigue curve for the filaments of the cable via dynamic tests,
- producing a test cable from the material of the cable, wherein the test cable is comprised of a number of sections that are detachably connected to one another,
- determining the minimum breaking load of the sections of the test cable,
- mooring the vessel to the pertaining buoy via one of the elastic cables accompanied by the interposition of a load-monitoring~~carrying~~ system,
- placing the test cable adjacent to the elastic cable,
- removing sections from the test cable at prescribed time intervals,
- determining the minimum breaking load for each removed section of the test cable and forming a first coefficient A with reference to the original minimum breaking load, wherein the first coefficient represents the loss of carrying strength as a consequence of environmental influences,
- from the coefficients A determined for all of the sections of the test cable, establishing~~plotting~~ an environment-dependent curve against time,
- associating with each first coefficient A a second coefficient B that, for the point in time of the removal of the pertaining section of the test cable, is determined from the fatigue curve on the basis of the load spectrum (load frequency and strength over time) supplied by the load-monitoring system, wherein the second coefficient represents the loss of carrying strength as a consequence of the load influences,
- multiplying the ~~pair~~pairs of coefficients A and B together to form reduction factors,
- at the conclusion of the test phase, dismantling the elastic cable, determining its remaining strength, and comparing it with the original minimum breaking load to form an

actual reduction factor, thus enabling a comparison with the reduction factor determined forat the same point in time via the test cable;

- forming the currentactual reduction factors of a future cable from the coefficient B, which is determined from the fatigue curve and the actual load spectrum, as well as from the coefficient A, which is read from the environment-dependent curve,
- estimating the remaining operational life of a future cable from the currentactual reduction factors thereof, including a safety factor.

On page 4, line 19 through page 5, line 8, please amend this paragraph as follows:

The invention is based on the recognition that the operational life of the elastic cable is a function, on the one hand, of the mechanical loads, namely of their magnitude as well as the number of load changes, and on the other hand of the respective environmental conditions which, of course, can vary from one location of use to another. Entering into the load spectrum are, in addition to the wave spectrum (height, length and frequency of the waves), primarily also wind and flow conditions. The environmental influences are primarily determined by the salt content and the temperature of the water, the intensity of the UV radiation, and the water biology, which is crucial for the fowlinggrowth of algae on the cable. The capacity of the cable to absorb water also plays a role.

On page 6, lines 1-4, please amend this paragraph as follows:

The reduction factor, which is < 1, is multiplied with the original minimum breaking load and results in the remaining minimum breaking load, which after inclusion of the safety factor permits an estimation of the remaining operational life and includes the safety factor.

On page 6, lines 17-20, please amend this paragraph as follows:

The reduction factors of the test cable sections are preferably established~~plotted~~ as a remaining strength curve against time, whereby the particularly advantageous possibility exists of being able to extrapolate the remaining strength curve beyond the test phase.

On page 13, lines 4 – 12, please amend this paragraph as follows:

After the dismantling of the elastic cable, its remaining strength, in other words the actual minimum breaking load, is determined, whereby with respect to the diameter of the elastic cable, merely individual filament tests are possible~~involved~~. A comparison with the remaining strength that is determined via the test cable at the point in time of dismantling of the elastic cable ensures that the latter~~remaining~~ strength coincides with the actual remaining strength of the elastic cable. If necessary, an extrapolation of the remaining strength curve is possible.

On page 13, line 14, through page 14, line 2, please amend this paragraph as follows:

To determine the operational life of a future elastic cable, the coefficient B is determined at time intervals, and in particular on the basis of the current~~actual~~ load spectrum and the existing fatigue curve, by application of the "Palgren-Miner-Hypothesis". In addition, for the same point in time the coefficient A is read from the environment-dependent curve. A multiplication of the coefficients A and B results in the current~~actual~~ reduction factor < 1, which by multiplication of the original minimum breaking load leads to the actual remaining strength. The remaining operational life can then be estimated using the safety factor.

Further to our Preliminary Amendment of March 3, 2006, please amend the newly added abstract for the specification as follows: